

19-YEAR-OLD SENSATION IS PRODUCT OF NEW YORK'S BACKYARD BOXING SCHOOL

**Benny Leonard, Who Recently Outclassed
Champion Welsh, Learned His Marvellously
Clever Stuff in Bouts With Playmates in
the Bronx, and Was Champion of the
Block When He Was Nine.**

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TO GO right back to the beginning, Benny Leonard was born at Eighth Street and Avenue C, New York City, April 7, 1896. When he was five years old he was still nineteen. The list of boxers who have reached true championship form at the age of nineteen is extremely short.

R. Edgren's COLUMN



There are three fighting Leonards: Willie, Benny and Charlie. Only Willie doesn't fight any more. He's chief second for the other two. As for Benny and Charlie, Benny is undoubtedly the best lightweight in the world at the present time, and if he can induce Champion Freddy Welsh to meet him where a referee's decision can be given there's little doubt that he'll be champion and holder of the lightweight title as well.

Billy Gibson, manager, Benny Leonard and Charlie Leonard called in to see me. Benny and Charlie are almost exactly of the same height. Benny is just two years older, and he weighs about six pounds more than Charlie. As for the records of the two—it would be hard to say which is most sensational. Benny is wide-awake, quick-eyed, high strung. Charlie is smiling, soft spoken, and rather languid in appearance. Benny looks what he is—the keen and active fighting man. Charlie doesn't look what he is, for under the languid air and behind the dark, heavy-lidded eyes is concealed the pep of a stick of dynamite. In action Charlie is explosive. He likes to win his battles within thirty seconds of the first gong.

"I BEGAN boxing when I was about nine years old," said Benny. We used to box in the back yard. My uncle always took an interest in our boxing and encouraged us to stick to it. The yard was full of flower beds, with a circular spot of smooth earth in the middle. We used the circle for a ring. I boxed with all the other boys around the neighborhood and up and down the street. Sometimes I boxed with the big fellows. We just boxed for fun. After a while I was known as the champion of the street. I was pretty fast.

"The first purse I ever fought for was in one of the little scraps in the circle between the flower beds. There was another kid—Joe Fogarty—and we were pretty well matched. They wanted the hat and took up a collection to make a purse. There was fifty cents in the hat. We agreed to split it 50-50, like the champions. I stopped Fogarty in the fourth round and got thirty cents for my end. He got twenty cents as the loser's end. My uncle acted as my manager and Joe had a manager. My manager let me have my end of the purse. He didn't take out a percentage.

"When I was fourteen we moved up to One Hundred and Sixty-Fifth and Kelly Street. That's where I began to get really interested in boxing. Some other kids and I used to slip into the Fairmont Club through a back window to see the bouts. One night when I was sixteen—I was looking in the window at the fights. I remember I saw Kid Herman fighting Johnny Kelly that night. While we were looking some of the kids crowded and broke the window. The watchman came to let some of us in to see the bouts, but this night when he heard the window break he ran out and grabbed two or three of us. He got me. He took us to where Mr. Gibson was. You remember that?"

"Sure," said Billy Gibson, taking off his green hat and rubbing his head. "I remember that. Let me tell it. The watchman brought you in and told me about the broken window. He said: 'What'd you mean, breaking in that way?' And you only had one thing in your mind. You slipped out of that window to come around the next Saturday."

"YES," said Benny. "That was my start. I came around Saturday and went on with Mickey McEgan. I knocked him out and Mr. Gibson paid me \$5 himself. That was my first purse in a real bout. When I got out all the kids in the neighborhood were waiting for me, and we had a party and spent the \$5 for ice cream and cakes. Gee, that was some party! I have one after each fight. We keep the house open until late, and all our friends the neighbors are welcome. Mother has lemonade and cake for the boys. The night I fought Welsh there was such a crowd in the house and in the street that I couldn't get in for a long time. After that first fight in the Fairmont I boxed every week. I had

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BEST SPORTING PAGE IN NEW YORK

ONLY 19 AND HE BEAT THE CHAMPION

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**BENNY LEONARD,
BEST LIGHTWEIGHT
IN THE WORLD.**

CHAMPION WELSH SHADES MITCHELL.

(Special to The Evening World.)
MILWAUKEE, Wis., April 8.—Freddie Welsh, the lightweight champion, had a shade the better of a fast ten-round fight with Ritchie Mitchell of Milwaukee last night. The local boy was out-weighted by ten pounds, but put up a great battle. Welsh gained his stride on the score of blows landed, the champion excelling in the lightning. At close range and in the clinches he was unbeatable. Early in the fight he discovered that Mitchell was an adept at protecting his jaw, but was weak on the defensive below the neck. So the champion went to work and proceeded to pound Ritchie in the stomach.

Fistic News and Gossip

By John Pollock

Jim Coffey, the Irish heavyweight, who has not fought since he was stopped by Frank Moran in the ninth round of their second contest in Madison Square Garden, four months ago, was matched today by his manager, Billy Gibson. His opponent will be Jack Geyer, the Denver heavyweight, who has met many of the real heavyweights. They will come together in a ten-round bout at a boxing show to be held by the Stadium A. C. in Manhattan Opera House on next Thursday night. Coffey has been training for two weeks at the New Polo A. A. of Harlem.

Ted "Kid" Lewis, the English boxer, who is to fight Jack Britton in a twenty-round battle for the welterweight championship title at Dominicketti's club in New Orleans on April 24, is to receive a guarantee of \$2,000 with the option of accepting one-third of the gross receipts. Britton is to get a guarantee of \$1,500 with an option of 30 per cent of the receipts.

The fact that his wife is ill has been responsible for Jess Willard turning down offers which would set him \$5,000. These offers were made to him to make his appearance as a referee or give sparring exhibitions. The offers were from clubs at Buffalo, Toledo, Boston, Toronto and New Bedford, Mass.

The Fairmont A. C. of the Bronx has two good bouts for its regular weekly boxing show tonight. In one of them George Thompson, the fast bantamweight, formerly of California, but now of New York, will go against Jack Saylor, the second side boy, while in the main event Charley Leonard, brother of Benny Leonard, will box with Tommy Houck of Philadelphia.

Harry Dattler of Portchester is slated up for two fights by his manager, Jimmy Howard. His first will be with Jimmy O'Hagan, the Albanian welterweight, for ten rounds at the Knickerbocker A. C. on Saturday evening, April 15.

These two fast little bantamweights of Brooklyn, Dutch Brandt and Young Zulu Kid, will be the principals in the main bout of ten rounds at the boxing show of the Broadway Sporting Club of Brooklyn tonight. Zulu Kid recently gave Johnny Kerk a terrific lashing, compelling Kerk to extend himself in order to get the newspaper writer, Marty Allen and Busby Graham also battle ten rounds.

These local fighters and a good lightweight bout will make up the two featured contests to be held at the Stadium A. C. show in the Manhattan Opera House on West Forty-fourth Street, tonight. Harry Donahue of Florida, III., who has fought many good bouts here, will go against Dick Peters of the west side and Angie Batten will take on Farmer Sullivan of the Ninth Ward.

While Morahan, the chubby heavyweight of California, who has taken part in eight bouts since he came East, getting the newspaper decisions in all of them, made an excellent fight with Billy Williams on Wednesday, Morahan will fight Larry Williams at the Olympia A. A. of Philadelphia on Monday night.

Whether he wins or loses in his ten-round bout with Johnny Dundee at the Broadway Sporting Club of Brooklyn on Tuesday night, Phil Brown, the Brooklyn lightweight, will take on Benny Leonard for ten rounds at the Knickerbocker A. C. on April 20. Brown is in excellent condition for both bouts, as he is working harder than ever.

Jimmy Johnston announces that the first picture exhibition of the Willard-Johnson fight pictures in New York City will take place at the studio of the Douglas Motion Picture Corporation, No. 178 Fulton Street, to-morrow afternoon at 3 o'clock. This presentation is also for sporting writers and friends.

Giants Beat Yankees Through Hit-and-Run, A Play Donovan Dislikes

American League Team Manager Advised His Men Not to Use
This Kind of Strategy in Their Training Camp. Yet It Is the
Play That McGraw's Men Used to Turn What Seemed Like
Sure Defeat Into Victory.

By Bozeman Bulger.

THIS one play that upset the Yanks, giving the Giants their first winning notch on the spring series, by an odd coincidence, is the very one that Bill Donovan doesn't like and rarely uses. Less than a month ago at the Macon training grounds orders like this, in Wild Bill's deep bass voice, could be heard plainly in the grandstand:

"Say, you fellows, I want you to cut out that hit-and-run stuff now and go in to make some runs. Cut it out now, I tell you."

By that the Yank manager, a devotee of the old sacrifice hit, meant that he wanted his men to advance the runner with a bunt and then depend on a hit to drive him in.

It remained, therefore, for that selfsame hit-and-run play, so strongly condemned by Smiling William, to cause the downfall of his club in its first metropolitan appearance. It is also of passing note that not one sacrifice play attempted by the Yanks proved availing.

The sudden jolt came in the seventh inning when the Giants were one run behind. George Burns led off with a beautiful line smash to left for a single. Larry Doyle, the next batter, made one stab as if to bunt, throwing the Yanks off their guard, and drawing the infield in a little closer. He then gave Burns the sign for the hit-and-run. With the pitch Burns started and Peckinpaugh of the Yanks started to cover second, expecting the play there. As he did so Doyle smashed a clear single through the hole that had been left open at short.

Instead of merely advancing a runner this put the Yanks in a bad way with none out and Lobert sacrificed. Kauff's base on balls filled the bases, and the stage was set for Merkle's long drive to the fence which scored the winning run.

In one quick move the Giants had won what previously had seemed like a sure Yank victory. And the hit-and-run had done it!

Notwithstanding the chill that had teeth chattering in the grandstand the Yanks and Giants turned out as pretty a ball game as one would expect to see in midsummer. The chance of seeing another like it will probably fill the Polo Grounds on Monday.

There were no stiffened muscles, no limps and no hesitations about sliding when hitting the dirt was necessary to the play. It was clean, jump-up baseball and a tough going longer weak with the stick and clearly preparing themselves for the worst, as in the days gone by, waded into the fray full of confidence and with an air of cockiness in their every move.

The Giants, on the other hand, as if to erase the impression that they had grown careless on the training tour, worked with a snap that brought to memory the championship days 1911.

Every man apparently in his first-class playing shape, and the sun-tanned skins are ample evidence that few training days have been wasted.

PUTTING 'EM OVER With "Bugs" Baer

Overest, 1916, by The Press Publishing Co. (The New York Evening World).

Baseball prospects from Cleveland indicate that it is a beautiful spring, anyway.

Can't imagine what part Kid Broad takes in movies unless it's the third day at Gettysburg.

You're a pessimist when you can get a climb in your eye as an oil learning road.

Apparently Joe Wood hasn't decided whether he could get away with that masked marvel stuff at Harvard or Yale.

Counting the one entered by Mike Kahoe, there are now 3,492 second Ty Cobbs in the tournament.

Kid Pershing won't let Villa take his marbles out of the game and go home.

If Johnny Evers scuttles on the sideways you know it is going to be a hard summer for the ump.

Reverend should know that those big brutal, swarthy gardeners are going to ruin the children's cup.

Manager Herzog believes that no practice game is complete without a practice fire.

This is one season when the Yanks fans will not keep one eye on the game and the other on the exit.

A bullet couldn't get by Lou Canale's goal unless it cheated.

Only fault with the Springfield Six is tire trouble. Ask the man who owns one.

ANSWERS TO QUERIES.
X. X. X.—Chick Gandil is alive, but in Cleveland.
R. M.—Western women will fight saloons with 600,000 eggs. Purchase an adding machine and figure this out in nog.
Y. I. P.—You are pretty dense when you are thicker than the mosquitoes.
B. & O.—This can be explained on pathological grounds. It's the same influence that makes a butcher weigh his hand with the steak.
RUFF.—He was released to Minneapolis, 1897. Nothing about tortoise shell spectacles in the Declaration of Independence. Ty Cobb is better. Easily. No. Yes.
The diamond is according all the mean language and abuse hurled his way with a dignified silence.

RADIO RUDOLPH SAYS

"M O S T people rush away from publicity with all the speed of a fly spending the week-end on Tanglefoot."

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SPORTING.
TO-NIGHT—At Fairmont A. C. of Bronx: George Thompson vs. Jack Kayles. Charlie Leonard vs. Tommy Houck. Admission 50 Cents.
STADIUM A. C. MANHATTAN OPERA HOUSE. 54 ST., 8 AVE., Route. Adm. 50c. Box 75c-1.50. Box 22.
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